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DATE: 22 April 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director for Research and Reports

THROUGH: Chief, Economic Research, ORR  
✓THROUGH: Chief, Industrial Division, ORR  
FROM: Chief, Transport and Heavy Machinery Branch, I/I  
SUBJECT: Report of Committee on IR Product Coding

1. In accordance with your instructions we have reviewed the proposal of IR to reduce the amount of product coding and have concluded that the implementation of this proposal would not injure the research efforts of ORR.

2. The substance of the IR proposal is the reduction of product coding from 10 digits to three digits thereby reducing the possibility for machine recovery of documents on specific products. Product coding to 10 digits would, however, continue to be available for all material in the IR files processed before the cut-off date on product coding. Manual searching would have to be done for any new material processed after the cut-off.

3. The new system would enable IR to eliminate its product coding branch thereby freeing 11 slots. Three of these slots would be lost in an overall reduction of IR personnel. The remaining eight slots would be used to strengthen the Travel Folder program and the processing of documents for the plant files.

4. For those ORR branches which desire product coding beyond three digits the IR has agreed to code up to seven digits provided these branches so indicate their desire at this time. Under this arrangement machine recovery would be effected through three digits with the IR analyst performing a manual search to recover documents coded beyond three digits. During our investigation we discussed this matter with the division chiefs of the ERA and the Geographic Area and with the chief of [REDACTED]. The chiefs of those branches which have made the greatest use of product coding -- I/BE, A/CH, N/NE and C/COM--were

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also consulted. There was no objection to the IR proposal from any of the individuals contacted. Nor did any of the branches or divisions express a desire to request IR to code beyond three digits for the commodities within their field of responsibility.

5. We feel that while there would be some reduction in the ability of IR to recover speedily documents on specific commodities under the proposed change, the interests of ORR analysts would not be materially damaged. ORR analysts in the past have made few requests for product coding that could not be covered by a three-digit system. Furthermore, the analyst can continue to obtain machine recovery up to 10 digits on the mass of IR material processed prior to the changeover to the new system. We think that the strengthening of the [REDACTED] Section and the area branches of IR made possible by the elimination of the Product Coding Branch will more than compensate for the slight reduction in the efficiency of IR product coding.

6. It is recommended, therefore, that ORR agree to the change in the product coding system as proposed by IR.

/s/ [REDACTED]

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